



Arkansas River Advisory Committee

Meeting Highlights from May 25, 2005

Place: 8th Floor, City Hall 455 N. Main, South Conference Room

Next Meeting Scheduled: June 22, 2005

In attendance:

Libby Albers, Department of Environmental Services
Ken McCloskey, KS Department of Wildlife & Parks
Tom Swan, KS Department of Wildlife and Parks
Kathy Dittmer, Riverside Citizen's Association
Kay Drennen, Department of Environmental Services
Jack Brown, University of Kansas
Lucy Burtnett, Sedgwick County
Bob Martz, Council Member
Marsha Carr, Riverside Citizen's Association
Gerald Holman, Chamber of Commerce
Tom Kneil, Arkansas River Coalition
Tonya Bronlewee, E.A.R.T.H.
Janet Wright, Wichita Festivals

Agenda Item 1: Report on Ark River Technical Committee

No report given.

Agenda Item 2: Canoe and Kayak Access: Ken McCloskey and Tom Swan (KDWP)

Overview of the proposed KDWP/City of Wichita Parks Department goals for the Canoe Trail:

- The Arkansas River is one of three navigable rivers in Kansas – this allows the public access any place within the banks of the river including sandbars. From Hutchinson to Wichita, the river is wide enough to paddle year-round. The average elevation drop is four feet per mile, which provides adequate flow for paddling.
- The proposed route could be one of the **longest canoe trails** when completed: 150 miles with 30 access points.
- **Current access:** five points in Rice County, none in Hutchinson, one in Oxford, one in Wichita at Garvey Park.
- The proposed trail could be a **destination point**. There would be stopping points or tourist attractions at the access areas.
- The proposal calls for an access point every five miles beginning in Rice County and ending near the Okalahoma border. **First phase would be from Hutchinson to Oxford.**
- Potential access points would include city owned land, parks, county leases, dead-end roads, museums, etc. All of the access points would not be “full service” (water, restrooms, parking, etc). Points would have signage stating: how long until the next pull-out, safety information, camping information, and where water and restrooms are available.
- The KDWP and the City of Wichita Parks Department are working together to find a consultant to create an initial plan and lay out the stages of progression. KDWP is also looking to Sedgwick County, the City of Hutchinson, Oxford, and others for support. Hopefully by 2006 or late 2005 the consultant will have been chosen and have prepared the preliminary trail plans that will identify the primary and secondary sites.

Agenda Item 3: Revision of “Action Items” from the 2000 Ark River Symposium

The original Ark River Symposium ideas have been condensed and sorted in an Excel format. They have been distributed to the Technical Group. Both groups have been tasked with inputting updates to the efforts originally suggested and returning them to Libby Albers before the July meeting.

Agenda 4: Discussion

- Get a group together for a float to promote the Canoe Trail proposal
- Vital to involve legislators so that they know the interests of the public and work to keep the Ark River listed as “navigable”
- Need to lower the Lincoln Street dam during times of high flow to flush the sediment
- Can the State Tourism and Advertising folks be involved somehow?
- What grants are available?
- Take plan to the REAP

Other Items

Next River Trash Round Up: May 6, 2006

Send your updates on the Ark River Symposium ideas to Libby before the July meeting.

Adjourn